

but ultimately only 35 out of 38 States had ratified the ERA when the deadline expired in 1982.

Congress can and should give the States another chance. In 1992, the 27th Amendment to the Constitution prohibiting immediate Congressional pay raises was ratified after 203 years. Article V of the Constitution contains no time limits for ratification of constitutional amendments, and the ERA time limit was contained in a joint resolution, not the actual text of the amendment.

The Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution requires “equal protection of the laws,” and the Supreme Court has so far held that most sex or gender classifications are subject to only “intermediate scrutiny” when analyzing laws that may have a discriminatory impact. In 2011 Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia gave an interview in which he stated that “certainly the Constitution does not require discrimination on the basis of sex. The only issue is whether it prohibits it. It doesn’t.” Ratification of the ERA by state legislatures would provide the courts with clearer guidance in holding gender or sex classifications to the “strict scrutiny” standard.

The ERA is a simple and straightforward constitutional amendment. It reads: “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” The amendment gives power to Congress to enforce its provisions by appropriate legislation, and the amendment would take effect two years after ratification by the States.

March is Women’s History Month. And today is the 40th anniversary of passage by the Senate of the joint resolution to extend the ERA ratification timeline on March 22, 1972. Today, nearly half of the States have a version of the ERA written into their State constitution. My own State of Maryland’s constitution reads that “Equality of rights under the law shall not be abridged or denied because of sex.”

I am therefore pleased to introduce this joint resolution today, which is endorsed by a wide variety of groups, including United 4 Equality, the National Council of Women’s Organizations, the National Organization for Women, and the American Association of University Women. I urge my colleagues to support this joint resolution.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 404—RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND WORK OF WAR CORRESPONDENT MARIE COLVIN AND OTHER COURAGEOUS JOURNALISTS IN WAR ZONES

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following reso-

lution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 404

Whereas The Sunday Times reporter Marie Colvin was killed during the shelling of a makeshift media center in the Baba Amr neighborhood of the besieged Syrian city of Homs on February 22, 2012, along with French photographer Rémi Ochlik;

Whereas Ms. Colvin leaves behind a beloved family where she grew up in the State of New York, was educated and began her journalistic career in the United States, and throughout her career as one of the foremost war correspondents of her generation exemplified American values of humanity, accountability, decency, transparency, and courage;

Whereas Ms. Colvin worked with relentless bravery to report on the recent uprising in Syria and to expose crimes against humanity, human-rights violations, and the ravages of war in conflict zones throughout the world, including the Balkans, the Chechen Republic, Libya, and Sri Lanka, where she was seriously wounded and lost vision in 1 eye;

Whereas Ms. Colvin shed light on human-rights violations through her courageous reporting on how these conflicts affected the lives of individuals;

Whereas the actions of Ms. Colvin in Timor-Leste are widely credited with averting a massacre;

Whereas Ms. Colvin said, “Covering a war means going to places torn by chaos, destruction, and death, and trying to bear witness. It means trying to find the truth in a sandstorm of propaganda when armies, tribes or terrorists clash. And yes, it means taking risks, not just for yourself but often for the people who work closely with you.”;

Whereas the work of Ms. Colvin exemplifies the best qualities of journalism;

Whereas Ms. Colvin was awarded the 2000 Courage in Journalism Award from the International Women’s Media Foundation for behind-the-lines action in Kosovo and the Chechen Republic, twice named Foreign Reporter of the Year at the British Press Awards, named the Journalist of the Year by the Foreign Press Association in 2000, and named Woman Journalist of the Year by the Foreign Press Association in 2010; and

Whereas Ms. Colvin and brave journalists have lost their lives serving as the conscience of the world: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) extends its sympathy to the families of Ms. Colvin and other reporters who have died reporting from conflict zones;

(2) recognizes the bravery of Ms. Colvin and other correspondents and photographers who have lost their lives while exposing the truth;

(3) calls on the world community to honor the memories of Ms. Colvin and other reporters; and

(4) calls on the government of Syria to halt the brutal attacks against the people of Syria and to respect their human rights.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 405—AUTHORIZING THE TAKING OF A PHOTOGRAPH IN THE CHAMBER OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE

Mr. REID of Nevada (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 405

*Resolved*, That paragraph 1 of rule IV of the Rules for the Regulation of the Senate Wing of the United States Capitol and Senate Of-

fice Buildings (prohibiting the taking of pictures in the Senate Chamber) be temporarily suspended for the sole and specific purpose of permitting the Senate Photographic Studio to photograph the United States Senate in actual session on Tuesday, March 27, 2012, at the hour of 2:15 p.m.

SEC. 2. The Sergeant at Arms of the Senate is authorized and directed to make the necessary arrangements therefore, which arrangements shall provide for a minimum of disruption to Senate proceedings.

#### NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI intend to object to proceeding to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service, dated March 22, 2012.

#### NOTICE OF HEARING

##### COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Thursday, March 29, 2012, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on current and near-term future price expectations and trends for motor gasoline and other refined petroleum fuels.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by email to [Allison\\_Seyferth@energy.senate.gov](mailto:Allison_Seyferth@energy.senate.gov).

For further information, please contact Hannah Breul at (202) 224-4756 or Allison Seyferth at (202) 224-4905.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

##### COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

##### COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 9:45 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “International Harmonization of Wall Street Reform: Orderly Liquidation, Derivatives, and the Volcker Rule.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 10:15 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled "Environmental Protection Agency Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Hearing."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate to conduct a hearing entitled "Stay-at-Work and Back-to-Work Strategies: Lessons from the Private Sector" on March 22, 2012, at 10:15 a.m., in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 2:15 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 2:15 p.m. in room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 22, 2012, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 10 a.m. in room 432 of the Russell Senate Office building to conduct a roundtable entitled "A Spotlight on Small Business Investment Companies and Their Role in the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012. The Committees will meet in room 345 of the Cannon House Office Building, beginning at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, GOVERNMENT INFORMATION, FEDERAL SERVICES, AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs' Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, "New Audit Finds Problems in Army Military Pay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Health Care of the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 10 a.m., in room 215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Prescription Drug Abuse: How are Medicare and Medicaid Adapting to the Challenge?"

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS AND FORESTS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 22, 2012, at 2:30 p.m., in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Tyler Bischoff, Sam Jones, and Nicole Burda of my staff be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's proceedings.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session and the HELP

Committee be discharged from any further consideration of PN1376, a list of 201 nominees in the Public Health Service; that the nominations be confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the Record; that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
*To be surgeon*

Peter S. Airel  
Leanne M. Fox  
Edith R. Lederman  
Suzette W. Peng  
Tiffany M. Snyder  
Daniel S. Vanderende

*To be senior assistant surgeon*

Andrew H. Baker  
Eli T. Lotsu

*To be dental officer*

Carol J. Wong  
*To be senior assistant dental officer*

Ann N. Truong  
*To be assistant dental officer*

Melissa L. Aylworth  
*To be assistant nurse officer*

Brutrinia S. Arellano  
Jason J. Brown  
Patricia K. Carlock  
Kristen M. Cole  
James A. Daugherty  
Ellen I. Dieuluste  
Symphosia A. Forbin  
Marcus S. Foster  
Rebecca Garcia  
Cynda G. Hall  
Dustin K. Hampton  
Anastasia A. Hansen  
Temika N. Hardy-Lovelock  
Carita K. Holman  
Ick H. Kim  
Patrice M. Leflore  
Stephanie K. Marion  
Myrtle Massicott  
Randa K. Merizian  
Randoshia M. Miller  
Gustavo N. Miranda  
Nicole A. Mitchell  
Vera C. Moses  
Nathan A. Moyer  
Damian P. Parnell  
Bryan Smith  
Juula Stutts  
Linda A. Tondreau  
Wayne A. Weissinger  
Paul A. Wong  
Katrin E. Wood

*To be junior assistant nurse officer*

Jessica M. Allen  
Nicholas R. Bahner  
Trevor A. Baird  
Jason E. Bauer  
Shannon D. Braune  
Kendall G. Brown  
Stacey L. Bruington  
Kassidy L. Burchett  
Andrew J. Colburn  
Aida Coronado-Garcia  
Marlene Corrales  
John F. Ehrhart II  
Sharice N. Elzey  
Lindsay J. Gregory